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UNIVERSAL RELIGION

By

Thakur Sambhu Nath Chakravarty

Translated from Bengali

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PREFACE

Amid a bewildering multiplicity of religious creeds and dogmas man is groping his way towards self-fulfilment or liberation from bondage. That cherished state of self-fulfilment can be attained if only man gets back to the pristine purity of his basic natural self and integrates his existence with the cosmic order of things. In a world torn with strifes and discord, bickerings and suspicion, the message of an integrated existence of man with the universe around points to the logical conclusion of a process of development that he has passed through. That message is, indeed, the sheet-anchor that man must hold fast to amid the swirling tides of contrary beliefs and notions, the beacon blaze to guide his erring steps through the obsessive gloom of this world.

An effort has been made within the narrow compass of this brochure to indicate in bare outline the process of a return to the basic nature of man and to universal humanism as the panacea for all our ills and the glorious end we have been striving for. If religious aspirants as well as readers in general derive any inspiration from the following pages, then the endeavour in bringing out the book may not have been undertaken in vain.

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THAKUR SAMBHU NATH CHAKRAVARTY

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PREAMBLE.

A return to the basic nature of man and to universal humanism is what constitutes the essence of self-fulfilment or the liberation from bondage.

Self-fulfilment in the proper sense of the word can be attained to if only man marches through life in the full consciousness of his natural state of manhood. The prevalent modes of worship have defeated that purpose inasmuchas man in his effort at alleviation of his sufferings and afflictions merely merges himself in Brahman, Iswara and so on and so forth. Guided as he is by the thoughts of minimising his sorrows and sufferings, man can hardly conceive that there is such a thing as his true and natural state to which he must revert to attain to self-fulfilment. This aspect of his being has remained unheeded so far and man has not felt the compulsive urge to get back to the pristine purity of his natural self. Such misconceptions affect the basic natural self of man inasmuchas the sorrows and sufferings, which the physical frame is heir to, can never be altogether eliminated as long as

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the physical body remains in existence. Our sorrows and afflictions come to an end when we enter into the astral body which knows only peace, abounding peace. Even as he shuffles off his mortal coil, man forgets all that he suffered in his bodily tenement and even ceases having any notion of the afflictions that others are subject to. Had he not been bereft of the memories of his past, and had he attained to a perfectly free and autonomous state of existence, he would surely have descended on earth and arranged for the redemption of the suffering humanity. But, far from doing so, the benign soul never puts in an appearance even though we may cry ourselves hoarse in our invocations to him.

It is thus patent enough that all talks about universal love and redemption of humanity are just mere words having no basis in fact. Some may however counter this with the remark that Savants like Srikrishna, Gouranga and Buddha, dedicated themselves entirely to the cause of redeeming the suffering humanity. But the point is, did they attain to complete freedom from bondage? Had they been free in the true sense of the word and attained to the omnipotence associated with independent Godhood,

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they would also have the powers to redeem the suffering humanity. How is it, then, that the assistance of Srimati Radha and Yogomaya (or the divine illusion) had to be invoked by them in order to perform their celestial missions on earth ?

The different stages in spiritual experience are all true, but freedom is relative to the aim of the aspirant and to his mode of worship. But real freedom is not conditioned by the aims and objectives of a fragmentary character. A return to one's true self means identification of oneself with all things. This integral consciousness or universal love is what we call the natural self or universal freedom.

It is also to be noticed that those who, as we are told, attained to the autonomous state of the Godhead and whose merest wish was sufficient to change the course of things, could not stay on in this world for ever and become immortals. As soon as they covered their allotted span of existence, they perforce had to seek refuge in nature. They could not transgress the laws of nature or transcend the limits of time. If they could do so they would surely not have been dead and would have lived on for ever.

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It follows, therefore, that those, who could not get beyond the barriers of time, are not also capable of leading others to redemption. One who is entirely free, self-sufficient and autonomous can perform whatever he likes. Such a one never cares for others, nor is in need of any adventitious aids in the pursuit of his avowed objectives.

The natural state is the state of freedom, and deviation from it is bondage. Nowhere but in the natural state one can experience perfect freedom of the spirit. The natural state of man alone is a state of never-ending dynamism, of never-ending quietude, of perfect detachment and autonomy. Such a state is perfectly natural and is the only living symbol of physical immortality.

This natural state of existence is not to be brought about by the worship of any individual being. It should be the cumulative effect of the worship of all humanity. Nevertheless, it will come into being through its own natural urge and not through the worship of any individual or of all humanity. The true state of nature did not come about through the worship of an individual being or of a group of human beings. It came into existence through its own inner urge. No one has so far attained

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to the perfect natural self, that is to say, to liberation from bondage. That liberation will be achieved not by a select few to the exclusion of others, but by all at one and the same time. Let it be noted here that the world is not wanting in perfection nor is it progressing towards perfection. The world is a perfect whole, as it ever was and will ever be. But while the world is a perfect whole, men are wanting in perfection. That this feeling of want leads man to perfection has been made clear in the following lines.

The split-up mind of man attains to perfection, as it reaches the subtler stage of development. The physical frame of man attains to the subtler stage of development when it ceases being perceived by the sense organs. At this stage the life force is all powerful while the mind ceases to function. And this affects the natural state of manhood inasmuchas the mind fails to attain to perfection. The ascent of the mind gets arrested at this stage and the physical body along with the senses remains to suffer disintegration. Thus, instead of the mind attaining to perfection, it remains at a stage that is unnatural. We want to see man invested with the three attributes

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and pulsating with energy, we want to see him detached even in the midst of his ever-changeful phases and multitude of experiences, we want to see him independent in his own natural self. This is the natural self-fulfilment of man. The mind will manifest itself in all the glory of its perfection when man will make no distinction between the attributes and nature, and between the universal state and his own natural state. Then, too, will all distinctions pertaining to religions cease to exist.

Let us now discuss about the attributes and nature of the universal state and the individual state. The mind split up into its three phases is ever restless. Again, the phases of the mind get synthesised and it becomes absolutely placid. It maintains detachment even in its multitude of experiences. Then again, the mind in its integrated form has an autonomous state of existence. This is the natural trend of the mind. If our worship is consistent with this trend of the mind, then we will be in a position to annihilate time. In no other way can we transcend the limits of time. And without annihilation of time all talk about liberation of the spirit ceases to bear any significance.

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All worship, in fact, the limitless treatises on the science of Yoga are devoted to the object of mental control. May we ask, then, why those great Savants, who are said to have experienced God in everything, had to engage themselves in yogic pursuits ?

Why is it that the savants fail to take notice of the fact that the mind has a natural, integral state of existence ? Why is it that they are busy controlling the split-up phases of the mind ? If all things derive their existence from God, then God is a perfect whole. This has been made clear in the well-known sloka on the salutation to the religious preceptor, where God is likened to a round universal whole "Akhanda Mandalākāram" etc.

If God is conceived as a perfect whole, then why should the mind, which derives its existence from Him, be anything otherwise ? Then should not one seek the natural way in preference to the way to the control of the mind ? The split-up mind is ever restive. That is its natural attribute. For, in that split-up state, one part is always making frantic efforts to meet the other. With the perfect whole, restiveness is no natural attribute. Thus, restiveness is natural in both the cases.

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In the split-up state restiveness is natural; again, in the perfect whole restiveness is unnatural and placidity is natural. Thus, all controversies will get resolved if we seek the perfect whole.

In this natural state man retains his humanism in full splendour and can attain to real perfection, maintaining his balance all through the different stages of development. And if men progress along these lines, there will be mutual sympathy and co-operation among the different members of humanity and they will walk hand-in-hand right up to their cherished end. Indeed, in this natural state men are in a position to retain the splendour of their humanism all through the different stages.

While trying to practise religious rites according to the needs of the age or of oneself, man has drifted far away from the proper mode of worship. Religion does not manifest itself differently in different countries and under different circumstances. The true religious temper is the true natural temper. Man can hold fast to it in whatever way he likes, but it would be wrong to hold to it according to one's personal interests or the interests of a group of humanity. For, religion is not subject to any tenet or dogma. And, therefore, it will be a

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serious blunder to try to ascertain its real nature by relating it to the needs of oneself or of a group of humanity. Generally, our tendency is to practise religion according to the needs of the hour and of oneself.

The religion that is subject to the conditions of time and clime is ever subject to change. The mode of worship prevalent in the 'Satya' Yuga differed from that prevalent in the 'Treta' yuga and this latter, again, differed from that prevalent in 'Dwapar' yuga and so on and so forth. Living as he does in this ever-changeful state, how can man hold fast to his own natural state ?

Then, again, this changeful religion is also being practised by men according to their several needs and interests. And this is the effort on the part of man to keep himself related to religion. We must bear in mind that we have to proceed along the path of true religion which is not relatable to one's personal needs and interests. The glory of religion in its natural state suffers an eclipse if we equate religious efforts to personal needs and requirements. We must not snap the connecting link between ourselves and true religion by behaving in that reckless manner.

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When the state of dormancy is over and man's basic self manifests itself through a multitude of experiences, we call it the real state of man. Even the crudest from of expression derived from the dormant state of manhood is manifestation of that basic self. That natural state of manhood is also the proper religious guide of man. This, again, is the spirit of the Divine Mother, which pervades all aspects of creation and is beyond the limitations of time and circumstance. This spirit of nature is described as the 'limitless particles'. And the supreme manifestation of this spirit is the limit of all creations and is described as the diameter of the universe. And this spirit of nature has no stages of development. This is the cumulative expression of all things and knows no stratification whatsoever. This is what we call the spirit of the Brahman or the spirit of nature. If we discuss the history of religions and the lives of great savants of old, we find that none has so far attained to this perfect natural state. And no one can ever attain to that state by pursuing unnatural modes of worship. This natural state is beyond attainment without recourse to an integral mode of cerebration. And the chief obstacle in the way of achieving that integral

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intellect is time. So, unless time is annihilated, one cannot attain to redemption through the integral mind. And the religious aspirant will have to engage himself in such pursuits as will make every moment a living experience and thus will annihilate time and enable him to attain to the desired objective of oneness with the Universal Spirit. This is true immortality—the spirit of integrating oneself with the past, the present and the future.

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UNIVERSAL RELIGION

"There are as many ways to spiritual realisation as there are religious faiths"—such was the message propagated throughout the world by Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda nearly half a century ago. It was a message of Universal Religion and the East and the West alike thrilled with delight and wonder as they listened to it. The Buddhists, the Christians, the Jews and the Moslems—all listened to that message of profound spiritual wisdom as it welled up from the soul of India in a stentorian voice. Again, a little over thirty years ago, another great soul of India stood forth and made the world acquainted with a system of Universal religion (so dear to us all) that has been transmitted to us through the great Indian Rishis of old. Paramhansa Yogananda, the great Yogi and religious preceptor, preached this message of Universal religion that has touched the hearts of all spiritual aspirants irrespective of their religious creed or community. The world has thus been enlightened on the subject of universality of religion, its proper tenets and ways to spiritual realisation. It is

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the same universal spirit that pervades all tenets, all sects, all religious systems and all individuals. And the time has come for us to realise that the worship of that universal spirit constitutes the true religion.

The idea of a universal religion embraces innumerable tenets, faiths and systems of spiritual realisation. All through the ages from times immemorial this spirit of universal religion has expressed itself in the diverse creeds, tenets and religious doctrines that emerged and disappeared in a never-ceasing cycle. The idea of a universal, integral reality sustained the various religious faiths and ritual practices all through the ages and the spiritual preceptors of these religious faiths endeavoured to reveal that idea of reality to the world to whatsoever extent they realised it in themselves. Thus it is, that the worship of the spirit of universal religion has revealed itself through myriads of fragmentary conceptions of that reality which dawned in the minds of men from time to time until the present day. When we say "There are as many ways to spiritual realisation as there are religious tenets practised by men" we acknowledge the integral character of all religious tenets and systems, the universality of all

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religious faiths prevalent in the world. But inspite of this message of spiritual harmony, we come across instances of aggressive communalism, of racial strifes and animosities, of religious conflicts waged with a ruthless fury. This is chiefly because the Universal Spirit, from which man derives his being along with every little fragment of this world, has little to do with the religion as practised in day-to-day existence. Where man practises religion, he does so, utterly forgetful of the universe around him. That is why the different religious communities, even though they worship the same eternal truth, fail to meet each other. That is also the reason why men, despite the fact that they are made of the same Universal Spirit, consider one another as altogether aliens. When, therefore, we talk about the synthesis of religions, we do not just mean by it a conglomerate mass of different tenets, doctrines & ritual practices, but we mean by it the realisation of the existence of the one Universal Spirit through everything in this world. The need for a universal religion is there just because the various religious communities represent only fragmentary aspects of that universal spirit. A Universal Religion alone

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will help to establish the sway of the universal spirit in this world which itself is the manifestation of that universal spirit in myriad shapes and forms. True religion consists in the realisation of our direct communion with that universal spirit which sustains and integrates all things of the Universe. Man, who has his being from this Universal Spirit, is also its most perfect embodiment. And it is through worship and practice of religious rites that one can attain to perfect realisation of that Universal Spirit. It is the sense of a constant oneness with the Universal Spirit that constitutes the most perfect unfoldment of a man's life. In other words, the universal spirit interpenetrates all the fragmentary expressions of the phenomenal world.

The Universality of religion is not limited to man's life alone. It is not man alone that has evolved out of the universal spirit ; the sky, the air, the land, the water ; infact, whatever constitutes this external world is pervaded by that Universal Spirit. So, it is not enough for us to make efforts to comprehend the nature of that universal spirit ; we have to make efforts to realise that the religion of man is relatable to whatever elements of this world constitute that spirit of the Universe. And we can attain

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to self-fulfilment if only we realise that sense of oneness with the universal spirit. The universality of religion is little evident in the community worship of Goddesses Durga and Kali. On the contrary, the communal aspect of religion makes itself felt in such religious practices. There may be a sense of universality even in the Community worship of Gods and Goddesses but this sense of universality is circumscribed within the limits of a particular class or community and would appear parochial when compared with the totality of objects constituting the universe. If religion is to be related to the universal spirit, then man shall have to transcend the limits of space and time and the rituals enjoined by the religious treatises and to merge himself in the wide totality of existence as constituted by the universe. The diverse religions of the world are like so many streams deriving their existence from the perennial source of one universal spirit of religion. And so, the universal spirit as constituted by the macrocosm has to be realised through the microcosmic entities of the universe.

The gospels preached by the great religious prophets of the world throughout the ages, are singularly free from any tinge of communalism

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in thought or feeling. The Great spiritual Savants of India, like Buddha, Sri Chaitanya, preached their religions with the sole objective of doing good to the world, but the religious communities in general fail to bring about a harmony of religions and set about preaching religions in their own ways, quite divorced from the high ideals and catholic interests that inspired the founders of those religions. The communal feelings that thus originate are not attributable to the preachings of the great spiritual Savants, nor are religions to be held as something corrupt on that account. It is man's own meanness that serves to distort religious precepts and brings about corruption in religious practices. If religion is to be purged of all corruption, then we must discover the message of the Universe, the true nature of ourselves and the spirit of the universal religion in all the utterances and practices of those preceptors of old. Only thus can we bring about a true harmony of religions. And like the eternal glory of the Godhead, religion will then manifest itself as the true spirit of the universe in all our disparate entities, pulsating like life in our body into an ever beautiful wakefulness.

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Integration and Synthesis

Nature is at once one and many. It manifests itself in myriad forms constituting the universe. If we analyse Nature we find that it is made up of the elements, the earth, water, fire, air and the sky. Everything owes its existence to Nature, which is the sum total of all created objects. Even as all things are created out of the universal spirit of nature, so do they exist in it and eventually disintergrate into it. The spirit of the Universe manifests itself in its three phases of creation, existence and destruction. Creation and decay, birth and death are just two functions of the same Universal spirit. And the same spirit continues to function during the span of existence between creation and decay. Wrapped as he is in Maya (or, the divine illusion) man is forgetful of the primal spirit that sustains all things and, so, tends to corrupt religion. Men get themselves lost in a morass of sin and pine for deliverance until the earth becomes hallowed with the advent of the prophets. This has happened all through the ages. The messages of the prophets serve as reminders to men of their real nature, the essence of their

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being. The prophets preach their religions in their own ways so as to suit them to the peculiar conditions of the ages. Even though the religious tenets and systems of religious practices preached in different ages were each different from the other, they were basically the same, having been derived from the same ultimate reality and conveying the message of one Universal spirit. The different religious tenets and systems of religious practices were devised and propagated by men who are essentially the same. And because they were the same in nature, in existence, in spiritual being, their religions could not have been different. Every man has within him the powers to effect a synthesis of those spiritual elements. Though each religion is apparently different from the other, they are essentially the same, being merely the different expressions of the same spiritual truth.

A survey of the spiritual lives of people all the world over will reveal that under the inspiration of different religious faiths, they have drifted far away from the ideals of Universal spirituality. And so one notices disorder and frustration in every sphere of man's existence, be it personal or social, political or spiritual.

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As long as this deviation from an integrated existence with the universal spirit will continue, man will fail to attain to self-fulfilment and universal spirituality. Not until he is in a position to effect a proper adjustment between the inner and the outer worlds by relating them to a wider sense of universal spirituality, will there be a proper union of hearts and synthesis in thoughts and ideas and spiritual experiences. Not until then will this conflict between individuals and small groups of individuals be over. And without this integration of one's religious experiences with the universal spirit, one cannot bring oneself into co-existence with the ultimate reality as represented by God.

If we analyse nature into its constituent elements, the earth, water, fire, air and the sky, it ceases to be that one spirit sustaining the universe. The synthesis of those five elements makes for the oneness of the universal spirit. These elements, unless they unite with one another, cannot establish the integrality of their individual entities. Similarly, man, sustained that he is by the Universal Spirit, cannot, under the influence of varied rel:gious concepts, establish the integrality of his existence with the universal spirit while remaining alienated from his

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fellowmen. For, an undivided sense of spirituality is the sole source from which all collective expressions of religious thoughts and experiences emerge. The chief reason why different religious tenets were devised by different religious founders is that they realised the spiritual truth in their diverse ways. The various religions are like so many expressions of the ultimate spiritual truth that embraces the universe. It is an indisputable fact that the various religions have evolved from the same spiritual consciousness, having for its bed rock the ultimate reality of the Universe, and men are like so many smaller realities drifting along the tide of universal consciousness. Such a consciousness is the *sine qua non* for a religious existence.

Even though the various religious concepts and the principles enunciated for self-realisation are like so many expressions of the ultimate reality, they very often serve as obstacles in the way of one's integration with the principle of universal spirituality. For, when a man sets about practising religious rites under the influence of a particular religious creed, he generally forgets the ultimate source from which all religions emerge, and loses himself in the observance of narrow dogmas and rituals. And

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this leads to the disintegration of his personality It is because one fails to extricate oneself from the meshes of ritual practices and to merge oneself into one infinite sense of spirituality that we find men leading religious lives and withal remaining altogether different from each other. That is why men get alienated from one another and their lives, be they personal or social, remain incomplete. Notwithstanding the religious creeds and the prescribed ways to spiritual realisation, there cannot be any real well-being of man or of the Universe as a whole, as long as man fails to effect a proper synthesis of his existence with that of the Universe.

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Living Ideals and ways to Self-realisation.

When a man is born into the world, he bears in him a sense of unity with the spirit of the Universe and he sets about performing religious austerities in order to attain to perfect realisation of his oneness with that spirit of the Universe. Man has emerged from the Absolute and his aim in life is to realise that Absolute within him. He is the microcosm in the macrocosm. His true nature is but the nature of the Universal spirit. But soon after he is born into the world, man gets himself lost in illusion, forgets the true nature of his being and runs mad after worldly pursuits. Notwithstanding this, man cannot altogether remain oblivious of the true nature of his being, permeated that he is with the spirit of the Absolute. While groping to establish contact with the spirit of the Universe, man comes across the various faiths prevailing in the world and becomes a follower of one or other of the faiths. It is because he feels a hidden want of something akin to his nature, that he runs about seeking for a religion after his heart. When

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he forgets the true nature of his being and strays from the conception of universal spirituality he gets busy to fill up his want by resort to unnatural practices. He becomes unruly and gets fuddled under the stress of emotions that are alien to the proper nature of man. But, even though he may drift far away from the path of rectitude, the all-merciful spirit of the universe keeps itself aflow in the subterranean regions of his being. And so, when some seer and superman makes his existence felt among mankind, the hidden flow of spirituality in man suddenly gets turbulent and makes him embrace some faith or other in an effort to realise the true nature of his being.

Now, the question is what should be the living ideal for a man and what the path to self-realisation. What want is it that a man seeks to fulfil by practicising religious austerities? Even the fragmentary concepts of religion and the paths to self-realisation as enunciated therein are derived from a comprehensive knowledge of the ultimate reality. The savants propagate their religions only when they have realised the spiritual truth in themselves. Still, it would appear that the truth realised by the savants has not always been able to maintain a

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spirit of detachment and to help evolve in man a feeling of spiritual fulfilment—true to their own natural selves. Even the supermen have not been able to meet the hidden want of men belonging to different strata of spiritual development, nor have they been able to attain to perfect spiritual development in themselves. The spirit that sustains Nature can alone fulfil the wants of all beings of the universe. That spiritual sense is something distinctive and natural because God himself is so.

Now, what is meant by calling a thing as distinctive and natural? The need for water is not for itself but for all beings of the world. It exists in the universe by reason of its natural quality and magnitude. It never enjoys itself nor does it exist for itself. Its existence is natural and universal in so far as it helps determine the existence of others and establish the unity of the universe. Just as water never needs itself so the universe never needs itself too. That is why it is natural and distinctive. Man has evolved out of this Universe and that is why he is natural and specific in character. If we consider the natural state out of which man has evolved, we find that the five elements are all natural and specific in character.

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And that natural and specific quality is ever-existent in man. Man becomes unruly in so far as this sense of naturalness in him suffers a decline. It is only through integration with his basic self that man can attain to fulfilment of all his wants. He cannot attain to full development of his personality without contact with the Universal nature. This needs no proof inasmuchas nature, from which he had his being, is his only hope and salvation. It is this sense of oneness with the universal spirit that is the birth right of man and without this consciousness he cannot attain to full unfoldment of his personality. And so, the universe is the only living ideal for man and the universal way the ideal way to spiritual realisation. Everyone, be he an ordinary man or a superman, has to pursue a living ideal in a living manner. The superman, having already attained to a high stage of spiritual development, has no doubts or misconception as to the immortality of the divine spirit, alike in its cruder and finer manifestations, even though the existence of the divine in the cruder form may not be apparent to him. But to the ordinary man it becomes difficult to have faith in the existence of God in the finer aspects of things, if he fails

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to find his ideal realised in the cruder forms of the divine spirit. So, the ordinary man needs the ideal of the spirit, manifest alike in the cruder and the finer forms of things. And the vast universe alone can take the place of such a living ideal. It is difficult to accept the great savants, who have become known as the incarnations of God on earth, as the living examples of the Divinity. These savants come down to the earth on a mission and pass away when they have achieved it; so, it is not possible to establish the immortality of the divine spirit, as manifested in the bodily form through them.

The universe is something permanent and eternal. It has no beginning and no end. The forms of immortality that we come across generally in our mundane existence are no doubt the manifestations of the Universal spirit and an immortal being is one who exists in the manner the universal spirit guides him. So, the universe is the only living example for man and the path outlined by that spirit is the only path to spiritual realisation.

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God, Universe and Man.

(1) There are innumerable ways of worship of God, of performance of yoga and spiritual rites. And there is need, too, for those myriad ways of worship. It is essential that the various modes of worship befitting diverse stages in the spiritual development of man should find their fulfilment in the lives of man. It is through worship in different strata of spiritual development that man attains to universal knowledge. These innumerable ways of worship, as prevalent among innumerable men of the world, do neither exceed nor fall short of requirement. Everyone is the manifestation of the Eternal and the Infinite and the modes of worship vary according to the stages of spiritual development a man has attained. But the worship of universal humanity is not limited to any particular stratum of spiritual development. It is something universal and all-comprehensive. The Universal nature and the nature of a particular individual are never the same. While the Universal nature is one and infinite, an individual nature is only a fragment of the Infinite. God, the Universal nature and the universal man are integrated

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into one united whole. To know one aspect of this Triune Being is to know the other two aspects also. If, therefore, anyone has realised the nature of God, he will not make efforts to bring about all-round development of all people of the world through fragmentary modes of worship. God is not self-evident to all men and, so, it is difficult for most people to proceed on the path of worship in the firm faith that God exists. It is through spiritual development attained in previous births and through efforts at spiritual attainment made in by-gone ages that some fortunate person attains to direct realisation of God's existence. But, to ordinary people faith in God and efforts to attain to a direct realisation of his existence depend upon a living ideal and an easy mode of worship. If one can hold forth a mode of worship which will enable men of all communities and religious sects to attain to material and spiritual fulfilment, then there would be no communal antagonism and the different groups of humanity will take that path to immortal existence and follow the way of Universal religion. All conflicts, whether racial, religious or lingual, will vanish and man will attain to self-fulfilment. But is that possible? Yes, most emphatically speaking, it is possible.

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(2) It is quite natural of a superman to have faiths in the existence of the divine spirit in its crude, fine, material and causal aspects. But, to ordinary people it is difficult to believe in an existence other than the crude and the material. Again, worship is meant not for any particular individual but for all. If a religion and the mode of worship prescribed by it is such that one or two fortunate individuals alone are in a position to proceed on the way to spiritual realisation and attain to self-fulfilment, and the rest of the people are unable to do likewise—then that religion can never bring about the real well-being of all humanity. This can never be a religion worth the name, nor can its tenets be considered all-comprehensive. A religion or a mode of worship that does the good of all humanity should be simple and easy of comprehension in the same way as all babies are easily suckled by a mother and made to derive sustenance from the same milk. Man should proceed by his own right on the path to spiritual realisation. A sense of unity and universality is at the basis of all religious worship. And Truth is one and indivisible. It is from diversity of conceptions that the various opinions emanate. Because people are

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so much opinionated, there is such great conflict and dissension prevalent in the lives of men, whether personal or political, notwithstanding all the religious worship that they profess to perform. No one can move about freely and yet be at one with others in the performance of his religious or temporal activities. If we study the history of religions we find that the various religions that held sway over men from time immemorial were devised and propagated by savants, according to the needs of the occasions and in conformity with their own personal levels of spiritual realisation. In most cases, these savants were interested in the well-being of particular groups of individuals and not in that of universal humanity. Had they been inspired with the thought of universal humanity, they would surely have to preach a universal religion. It is also true that all savants are not equally capable of thinking about the well-being of universal humanity. It is due to the preachings of those prophets that parochial ideas and communal considerations have spread to an overwhelming extent and men have even lost the capacity to free themselves from the sway of these considerations and accept all religions in a spirit of toleration. Man worships

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with a view to widening the scope of his mental and spiritual comprehension and to attaining self-fulfilment. One has not to worship to come up with God but to attain to the sense of divinity in his nature and behaviour. When man attains to the divine in his nature, the Divine reveals itself in him. God is beyond attainment or non-attainment.

The different religions have emerged from one universal religion. Therefore, all men have to attain to spiritual fulfilment along the various stages of development and, having so attained, prove that they have emerged from God. Men have to accept the universe as the living ideal and thus to proceed along the path to self-realisation. And thus will all wants of men, whether manifest or otherwise, be fulfilled. We take a prophet as the greatest and the best ideal for humanity and this is what has been enjoined on us by the religious treatises. Now, a person who is considered as a prophet (or incarnation of the Divine Being) is born of the universe, has his being in it and ultimately merges into it. A prophet, who has in him the most perfect manifestation of the universal spirit, is considered as co-essential with God. And it is only the universe from which God takes

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his rise, has his being and into which he merges himself, is immortal; the rest are all susceptible of change and destruction. Unless God takes some material form, no one can comprehend him as such. But the universe does not suffer from that limitation. It is material, spiritual and causal at one and the same time and is therefore indestructible. Its nature is also subject to visual perception. And the ordinary people have to be provided with such a living ideal and natural mode of worship as is suggested by the Universe, so that they can attain to a natural mode of existence by bringing themselves in tune with the spirit of the universe. And it is a fact of constant experience that man is sustained by the Universe through its five elements—light, the air, water, the earth and the sky. Judged truly, there is nothing to prove the living reality and indestructibility of the spirit without the universe which is a self-luminous reality. Is it not this universe that has helped men, in a collective sense, towards attainment of a living ideal? Can man exist without any of the five elements, the sky, the air, water, the earth and light? Man derives his existence from the universe which comprises the elements, has his being in it and again

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merges into it. It is the universe that can be taken as the supreme spirit and nothing else. No one has anything to ask of this supreme spirit of nature. It is self-fulfilled and fulfils the want of others. What is this primal cause or nature from which we derive our existence? Are this primal cause and the spirit of the universe one and the same? And so, if anything be found wanting in nature that a man has, in common with other men, derived from the universe, that want cannot be fulfilled unless he returns to the primal nature and becomes natural in his own right. If any ideal has to be the guiding principle then let us accept that living ideal of the universe that is sustaining us in every way. There is no difference between this nature of the universe and God; because God is manifest in the myriad objects that constitute the universe. And those myriad objects merge into one, that is God. There is therefore no difference between God and the spirit of the universe.

And such a realisation permits of no distinction between one religion and another, between the atheist and the theist, between one community and another. There is no conflict of opinions, no question of status, no question

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of good or evil. Do not the different fragmentary concepts and doctrinaire philosophies attain to completion when man attains to a state transcending all conflicts ?

Having been guided by varying religious concepts, man has lost hold of that universal religion, which makes for the synthesis of many into one. Having lost the moorings in a primal nature, man is now a victim to all manner of afflictions. He must again tread the path of the universal religion, which alone can enable all humanity to attain to spiritual realisation. This is the road that is free of all superstitious beliefs and opinions. Just as the five elements have little need in themselves but each needs the other to justify its own existence, so the different religions, themselves being expressions of spiritual truths, need to be synthesised into a universal religion to establish the right of their disparate entities. The diverse religions are fragmentary expressions of the spiritual truth and derive their existence from the one universal spirit.

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Communal harmony.

The religious communities, that preach religion in a bewildering multiplicity of ways, are now suspect in the eyes of humanity. Under the sway of different religions, men are led not to the realisation of truth but to strifes and conflicts with fellowmen. Confounded by the variety of religions, men are at a loss to perceive which of them is the ideal religion. How can men be consoled with mere religious injunctions preached by the preceptors and prophets? Bereft of peace of mind and a firm conviction in the existence of the divinity, men do not have the wherewithal to march through life facing all odds, until they reach the spiritual objectives. And, being guided by contrary opinions of religious preachers, they have come to lose all confidence in themselves.

The prophets of different religions try to bring all the people of the world within the fold of their respective religions. But that is hardly practicable inasmuchas men always cling to their individual opinions and prejudices. Every sectarian religion is largely influenced by

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particular opinions and prejudices and people who are attracted to those opinions and prejudices embrace those particular religions. True religion is always free of prejudices and opinions. A religious temper is always characterised by a certain detachment and nobility of disposition, because religion takes its origin from truth itself. True religion can never be circumscribed within the limits of sectarian opinions and interests. It is free, wide and universal. True religion embraces the totality of things of the universe, be it man or a minute particle. If only men will find out a religion that transcends the limits of sects and creeds, can they proceed as one united brotherhood along the path to spiritual realisation. Otherwise, the various religious preachers will do nothing but help multiplication of the numbers of men who are subject to particular notions and opinions. A truly religious temper can never derive its existence from sectarian opinions and notions nor can it be circumscribed within the limits of such an existence. It is ever free, ever magnanimous and universal.

Owing to conflict of opinions, the various religious sects cannot meet on a plane of universal relationship. At the root of this

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narrow sectarianism lies their abysmal ignorance of the nature of reality, their want of a true spiritual consciousness. Men of sectarian persuasions never feel any desire to learn spiritual wisdom even from a superman of great spiritual consciousness who has attained to the highest level of the religion of another community. This is the weakness of being communally-minded.

Nowadays we find quite a bewildering number of temples, chapels and monasteries throughout the country. These temples, chapels and monasteries spread feelings of dissension and conflict among men. A hermitage is a sacred spot where men can worship God. It is a place where all spiritual and temporal conflicts are resolved into some higher spiritual consciousness and, therefore, it is a haven of peace for suffering humanity. It is a place where all members of humanity meet and embrace one another. But now, a hermitage is the breeding ground of conflicts and dissensions.

An 'ashrama' (or hermitage) should be like a military camp. It exists as long as it has duties to be performed and then it ceases to

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exist. An ashrama should be the focal point around which the activities of men will go on. But now people carry on their activities for the sake of the ashrama. As long as the Ashrama is there, people will have to think about its welfare and progress. This also is a kind of superstition. Under the sway of this superstition the inmates of different ashramas, though they are worshippers of the same God, cannot meet in a free and frank way. If the inmates of these different ashramas cannot be free and frank amongst themselves and do good to one another, will they not be deemed incapable of resolving all doubts and conflicts in the minds of men and get them united into one brotherhood ?

Men should foster the feeling of a common brotherhood among all the inmates of ashramas or monasteries. If people, who have dedicated themselves to the pursuit of educating humanity and removing their wants, should themselves be engaged in mutual conflicts and dissensions, then, who else will perform that mission of fostering a feeling of universal brotherhood among men ? If the religious preachers do not reform themselves by removing all sectarian narrowness from their minds and be inspired

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by the lofty impulse of a universal religion, then they will be deemed by posterity not as the propagators of a disinterested pursuit of religion but as the very destroyers of religion itself. Many will try to excuse themselves with the maxim that the path shown by the great ones is the only path to be followed. But any one, who has truly accepted this maxim as his guiding principle, will not think that this great man is some superman. A superman is the manifestation of the spirit of the universe in human form. As a matter of fact, even the nature of the superman is not the absolute manifestation of the universal spirit. It is only that universal spirit manifested through the spirit of the universal man and not manifestation of the totality of things of the universe. But, when we speak of the universal spirit, the question of its being absolute or otherwise does not arise. The universal spirit suggests one perfect whole from which man derives everything without his having to ask of it anything. To get anything from the superman, one has to propitiate him with prayer. The great savants derive their spiritual attributes from the universe and transmit them to religious aspirants, or they direct the religious aspirants to derive those

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attributes from the universe. So a savant means the spirit of the universe and ideal worship is conforming oneself to the ways of the universal spirit. This is the one and only way to spiritual realisation. One may have to lose one's material body in the course of this spiritual adventure, still his immortal self will merge in the spirit of the universe and have an eternal existence. When a man leaves behind his achievements and dies, he becomes immortal in this sense and sets up an ideal, as such, before all humanity. The superman also evolves out of this universe and has his immortal being in it. After his achievements have been over, the body of the superman merges itself into the universe and becomes immortalised in all its aspects whether, crude, fine or causal. If we place the spirit of the universe and the superman side by side, we find this one as living and immortal, while the other is dependent for his existence on the former. The superman partakes of the qualities of the material and cannot therefore be considered immortal even though he may be existent in the 3 aspects, material, spiritual and causal.

It is high time we considered to what extent we, having been nurtured under the spiritual

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influences prevalent in this sacred land of ours, have progressed in realm of spiritual attainments. How far have we progressed both in our individual and collective existences? How far has the ideal of a spiritual existence developed both in the social and political spheres? If we judge aright, we will find that in comparison with other countries we have suffered more on account of accumulation of irreligious ideas and tenets. Religion has hardly any place anywhere, whether it is in the individual or in the society or in the State. Penury and afflictions are increasing day by day. Scarcity of food, disease, death and corruption hold the country in their grip. As we stand now, are we not objects of ridicule to the people of the west and of the other countries? Does not the present plight of India, once known as the land of spirituality, evoke doubts as to the efficacy of religious rites and practices? To speak the truth, we too have our individual opinions, notions and prejudices; we are not followers of the truth. And that is why we do not achieve any progress in the spheres of the community and the country. Not being followers of the eternal and ever beautiful spirit, we are not in a position to fulfil our wants. We have poverty and affliction in every sphere of our lives.

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It is therefore a problem with religious preachers as to how we can accept religion as the perfect expression of the universal man, as the living ideal that fills up the deficiencies in every stratum of our spiritual venture. The following are some of the suggestions for religious people to get themselves united and to devote themselves to the well-being of the universe :—

(1) All spiritually minded people and religious aspirants have to get themselves together and form into a corporate group.

(2) The religious tenets and modes of worship prescribed therein have all to be synthesised and made into an integrant reality in tune with the spirit of the universe, if we are to rehabilitate man to his pristine state of glorious communion with the Infinite.

(3) Just as God and the Universe, themselves self-contained and eternal, make for the unity and universality of man, so the religious preachers have to pursue a life of utter detachment. The universe contains in itself everything needed for the life of man. And all those elements in the universe are being utilised automatically for the good of mankind. Those elments are so easy of attainment that no

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one has to ask of them. Similarly, the religious preachers have to keep in readiness all the elements needed for the good of man and to stand forth to preach one universal religion.

The spiritual messages and religious rites do not prove themselves efficacious these days in rendering good to humanity. To-day we are in need of a living self-evident ideal at which humanity will suckle for sustenance. Secondly, what should be the process to bring man into harmony with the universe (and this applies equally to man's individual and collective existence) and to bring about an all-round development both in spiritual and temporal spheres?

(4) All humanity has to be brought within the fold of one vast universal brotherhood under the tutelage of the spirit of God. And progress should be all-comprehensive, covering the material, spiritual and causal spheres. This will develop the conviction that we are being nourished by the same universal spirit. This will lead to the creation of a religious state; we will be subjects invested with the same rights and responsibilities in that religious state. No religious dissensions and prejudices will create a

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feeling of ill-will amongst us. Every one will proceed in tune with the spirit of the universe and will be nourished by the divine spirit. And this will remove all obstacles in the way of union of all humanity viz., man's pride, prejudices, idleness, communal feeling, personal and social states and so on and so forth. Man will thus be guided towards attainment of the universal reality. This is the only natural way to spiritual realisation that man can evolve from himself. Man will turn back to God with the same consciousness of a spiritual existence which once brought him into being, and he will not have to resort to any unnatural process towards attainment of his spiritual objective.

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Gradations in effecting a synthesis of religions.

As we look around us to-day, we find that men are being swept into sin notwithstanding the existence of various religious sects. Why is it that there is so much of violence, intolerence and hatred prevalent among mankind? Why is it that nations and states engage themselves in strifes and bloodshed? In truth, no religious system has enabled man to perform his normal spiritual duties, while remaining in this mortal frame. There would not have been so much of conflicts and dissensions among men in the world, had men been able to find the basic elements of their primal selves in religion and so combined themselves into a corporate whole. If the religious systems had succeeded in bringing this unity of feeling among all members of humanity there would not have been so much of suffering and afflictions for humanity. The people of the world would have been spared the sufferings that flow from pursuit of false nationalist ideals.—Why is it that India that has been the cradle of spiritual consciousness looks to-day

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so much broken-up and defeated? Religious bigotry is the cause of this downfall of India. The false ideals of nationalism that inspired both Hindus and Muslims have not only led to the bifurcation of the country but to the undermining of humanitarian consideration and feeling of unity of Hindus and Muslims. And this is not the case with India alone but with the entire world. And so, as long as this sense of religious unity is not developed in man, the entire human community will have to suffer endless afflictions.

Religion is nothing different from the day to-day life we lead in this world. Religion is the effort that man makes to hold fast to his basic ,self which is made up of the elements of the universe. To nourish the physical frame and to help its gradual development is the religion of every man. Every one knows that a man born will have to die. Then why is this effort to live, to own house and land, to establish order in the society and the state, to earn and to aspire after knowledge? Does this not prove that death is not the ultimate end to our lives? Our lives are justified in our living and our aim is but to attain immortality. Death is not the desired objective of any one. So our basic

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nature is immortal and to achieve that we lead spiritual lives. We are naturally proceeding on the way to immortality, even though we may not be aware of it. If any aspect of our lives is true to nature then that is religion. Worship, performance of religious rites and penance all become a part of religion if only they are done in a natural and spontaneous fashion. Even if the pursuit of our daily activities—like eating, studying, earning or performing social and political duties—is directed towards achievement of a collective immortal state, then that is religion. When worship or performance of religious rites is divorced from the natural daily life of a man, it ceases to be a real and living religion and man fails to derive any joy out of such practices.

To preserve the body as a fit instrument for performance of religious duties one needs must eat nutritious food and live in a house tastefully maintained so as to make it fit for human habitation. The religious communities feel that their duties end with the propagation of spiritual messages. Penury renders individuals weak and emaciated and such individuals render the society sterile and moribund. The physical frame of a man thus loses its capacity for development of manly attributes. If, therefore, the

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religious communities are really bent on establishment of religion in the world, they must set about removing poverty from the lives of individuals as well as communities. Ill-nourished and undeveloped bodies can never be proper vessels for the unfoldment of the spiritual self. Everyone in our country should be provided with the natural means for subsistence. For a solution of this problem one must approach mother earth who is the respository of all wealth and means of sustenance. One must derive nourishment from the mother's breast. Agriculture and industry are the proper means for maintenance of the physical body in a natural way. All religious communities must first help man in the nourishment of his body. Every State has to be compelled to fulfil the elementary needs of a man for physical sustenance viz., nutritious food and a house fit for human habitation. This is the first duty of the state towards its subjects. When a state fails to perform these elementary duties, the social life of the nation becomes corrupt and disorderly. To enable the people of the world to lead healthy lives in a natural way, every state must arrange for development of agriculture. The religious communities must act as path-finders in this matter.

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Secondly, the physical frame is not the be all and end all of men. Just as one needs food for the preservation of the body, so also one needs mental pabulum for the nourishment of the mind. It is through knowledge that the mind is enlarged and one attains to spiritual realisation. Man has to attain to the perfect unfoldment of his being through the various stages of transformation, that is to say, he must proceed from the physical self to the spiritual and from the spiritual self to the causal. Without proper education the mind cannot be sufficiently enlarged. An education worth the name helps man in the unfoldment of his personality, so education is also a part of religion. It is through education that man attains to the knowledge of his proper self. The darkness of the physical body is cleared away by the light of knowledge and the vastness of the universe becomes mirrored in the life of a little individual. Every child should therefore have proper opportunities of education which is also the natural right of every individual. Every state is responsible for making proper opportunities of education available to every child living in it. But the States of the world have not been able to discharge this primary duty in a proper way. So the religious

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communities have to take up this responsibility of educating every child in the world. Every youth or adult has to be trained up in the art of making a proper living for himself. Unemployment and adverse situations in the way of making a proper living have rendered the social and political lives of individuals disorderly and unbalanced. It has now become impossible for a man to live a healthy natural life. Can there be any religion under such circumstances? So men have to be brought back to normal ways of living and this will enable them to lead natural and religious lives. The religious communities will have to come forward and help the States in making efforts towards achievement of this objective.

It will not be enough for the religious communities to arrange for nourishment of the body and mind of an individual. They will have to take up the task of destroying communalism and discovering a golden thread of common brotherhood among all the peoples of the world. Broadly speaking, we find men engaging themselves in struggles in every country for attaining a means of sustenance for the body. The mind and the intellect only serve to intensify the hatred and intolerance between one nation and

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another. For all its achievements in knowledge and science the world still remains mad with the fury of violence. The religious messages of the savants have not served to mollify these violent feelings. Christ, Chaitanya and Buddha have all failed to rehabilitate man to that pristine glory of his natural being. Now is the need for a universal religion which will not delude men in the manner the fragmentary religions of old did, but direct men to pursue religion with a view to attaining to universal spirituality. Let there be humanist endeavours and no nationalist feelings; let there be meditation for one ever-beautiful human spirit and nothing else. Let not the sectarian religions circumscribe minds of men within the limits of ritualist worship. Conflicts and dissensions will continue as long as men are not being guided to realisation of their basic selves. The religious communities have therefore to collaborate with one another in discovering a golden thread of unity which binds all men together to form a universal brotherhood under the sway of a universal religion. Men will thus have the opportunities to proceed towards development of their spiritual selves at all times and in all activities. There will be peace in the world only when the physical,

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mental and spiritual wants of men will be fulfilled and they will be able to proceed along their individual ways towards attainment of a humanist consciousness and perfect spiritual realisation.

Postscript.

With the revolutions and mass upheavals, the world is gradually tending towards the establishment of a social order based on the principles of equality and universal brotherhood of man. Still, obstacles in the shape of distinctions of caste, creed and colour come up in the way of achieving that cherished objective. Nonetheless, the struggle is becoming more and more intense day by day and genuine efforts are being made to find out a way to universal harmony.

If anyone cares to consider dispassionately whatever has been discussed in this brochure, he will surely feel that the suggestions made herein, if implemented, will pave the way for the establishment of equality and fraternity among all members of humanity and in all spheres of activity, whether social, political or spiritual. The suggestions will be deemed as most proper and opportune for the present day world. We propose to discuss the methods for achievement of the ideal in our next endeavour.

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(1) The Prime objective.

The object of this book is to give a detailed account as to the only means for integration of humanity with the various religions, ideas, languages and lands that will remove all want and, through a proper and natural synthesis, bring about the most perfect efflorescence of all individuals in the world.

This process of 'gradual integration' involves :—

(1) integration of humanity with religions,

(2) integration of humanity with ideas,

(3) integration of humanity with languages,

(4) integration of humanity with lands,

(5) integration of humanity with the spirit of the Divine Mother and

(6) the state of the Universal Nature.

The lovers of peace are invariably the believers in the principle of synthesis. If we are to usher in real peace in the world, we must first remove all distinctions of colour and creed. We know that we are all basically the same and our differences arise from our ways of approach

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and behaviour in the social environments. Why then, is there so much of squabbles, bloodshed and armed conflicts? The answer is that no one makes the effort to transcend barriers of his particular sect or group and to develop a sense of oneness with the universal humanity. This applies equally to the temporal and the spiritual spheres of existence. To this day we have not come across any historical or mythological instance of a religious man or group of religious men ever having made any genuine efforts at achieving a universal brotherhood of humanity. On the contrary, we have instances of humanity having been split up into an ever increasing number of groups and camps and the resultant intensification of mutual distrust and disharmony. Where the mind is broken up into fragments, the spirit cannot achieve integration with the Universal Nature. If ever well-meaning people made honest efforts to achieve this desired objective, they failed woefully, inasmuchas their efforts were limited to the particular religious tenets professed by them. Others, too, held that their religious creeds were elastic enough to effect a synthesis of the diverse nationalities of the world. And so, conflicts between diverse creeds and sects

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have been going on ever since the dawn of creation and this is true as much of the temporal world as of the spiritual. Truly speaking, in neither of the two spheres of existence has any progress been achieved. When we have not yet tackled the question by the root, progress is, naturally, far from being achieved. We know of the advents of quite a great number of saints and religious personages in the past but none of them appears to have considered the question of a proper fusion of man and religion in all seriousness nor to have known how and where religion first takes its origin or is capable of application. Had they been able to do so, the world would have been spared all the afflictions that it is now suffering from. Those who appeared on this earth with the avowed object of establishing order and righteousness among mankind should have known that religion is the sole synthesising force and directed their energies in clearing the impurities that beset humanity in the name of religion. If religion were to manifest itself spontaneously in men, men would not have to face all those impurities. As things stand at present, it would take long before those impurities could be wiped out.

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Talking about the synthesis between the two spheres of existence, it will be seen that the temporal and the spiritual spheres stand far apart and as long as a fusion of the two will not be achieved the idea of universal peace will remain an elusive dream, a mirage. The two spheres are ready to find fault with each other and never think of effecting a synthesis between themselves. Peace will be easy of achievement if only the political and religious forces of the world make a concerted effort to achieve it. The temporal and the spiritual spheres of existence will not achieve perfection for themselves nor for the world if they remain wide apart from each other.

If we study the history of religion, we find that many savants were born in the past but they could not transcend the limits of their sectarian tenets and advance towards the goal of a universal religion. Persons having fragmentary conceptions about religion cannot be expected to preach a religion that is universal and integral to mankind. Strangely enough, we find that the savants and religious preachers who achieved celebrity were really never interested in the preaching of a religion that would be comprehensive of all humanity. It

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is a patent fact that a person who has attained to a detached and religious temper can never be expected to be sectarian and universal at one and the same time.

Persons who profess to have attained to a knowledge of the Brahman and preach that knowledge do not appear to have ever looked at the world at large and asked themselves if the whole of mankind has attained to that knowledge of the Brahman. For, how can the knowledge of the Brahman be manifested in one being without being simultaneously manifest in all humanity? The world is pressed with unending afflictions. Such being the world, how can a person having once been favoured with the beatific experience of contact with the Brahman remain satisfied until the wants of all human beings have been removed? That which manifests itself naturally from God is meant for all and not for any individual soul merely. It can be easily imagined that the universal spirit is manifest as the ever-present being through all creations. So long as there will be any trace of sufferings in the world, the knowledge of the Brahman cannot be said to have been attained in the true sense of the term. The knowledge of the Brahman will

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become actual experience only when the entire humanity will get beyond the dichotomy of pleasure and pain and merge itself in universal nature.

The knowledge of the Brahman, as it is generally known to be, is far from what the real knowledge of the Brahman is. For the nature of the Brahman is beyond the restrictions of time and such knowledge will never be within our reach as long as time is not annihilated. The knowledge of the Brahman takes its rise from the nature of the Brahman and itself leads up to action of the Brahman. So, where these three aspects have been synthesised the true spirit of the Brahman makes itself manifest. A man will never be able to achieve any good for others as long as he has not attained to that distinct state of universal nature. The good of mankind cannot be achieved as long as man remains in the stratified existence; for, how can he engage himself in doing good to others even in the midst of his own pre-occupations? So, we find that to this day no one has been able to achieve that perfection.

We have no instance of a perfect human being who, having conquered death, has gone on living a perennial life and made efforts to

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bring others to achieve immortality. And so, as long as there will be diverse creeds and ways to spiritual realisation, the way to universal existence will remain an elusive dream. If ever such spiritual realisation is achieved by all humanity, then that will become possible through the instrumentality of one person only. Such a life could be considered as having achieved fulfilment in the real sense of the word. Without the universal love of such a person, who has achieved the distinct state of the universal spirit, no good can ever be done to mankind. The all-round fulfilment in the life of one person is enough to bring about that sense of perfection in all human beings.

Whether man admits or realises this or not, this is the only way to a natural oneness with the universal spirit. For, a person born with certain natural characteristics and aptitudes will, in the end, achieve perfection in the unhindered unfoldment of his distinctive characteristics and natural proclivities. If perfection were to be achieved by a person through his birth and existence, it will be achieved in his natural state of manhood and not through the medium of a different genus or species. If we trace this development from birth and through existence

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to decay, we will find that it is ever the same human species and not any other species or creation. Whatever has not been in existence as the basic nature of the species is never to come into being any time thereafter.

However much man may strive to achieve fulfilment through adoption of a fresh genus or species, his efforts are bound to become futile. For nothing can attain to its natural perfection, unless it proceeds towards that goal, basing itself on its own generic nature and attributes. Perfection of an object is dependent on the basic nature of the thing. Perfection evolves naturally out of nature. Even all deviations from naturalism evolve out of nature and their synthesis is also effected in nature. In fact, our wants are but another name for deviation from nature and the removal of the wants means restoration to the perfect state of nature. And so, as long as mankind does not return to the primal and perfect state of manhood in nature, all their myriad plans about achievement of a perfect spiritual existence or brotherhood of man will end in futility and the world will remain far removed from perfection. In other words, Man can not bring about the perfection of a natural state of manhood as

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long as he pursues his ideal in a spirit of sectarianism. As long as man will be guided by fragmentary notions of a spiritual existence and will feel a hidden want even in his natural self, he will fail to get over the narrow superstitions surrounding his natural self. And man can never hope to attain to the fullness of his natural self by striving to develop his fragmentary notions to perfection. It should be noted here that in the natural state there is no question of an accretion of acquired notions; and, a person nurtured with acquired notions can never aspire to being perfect in the natural state. One may have mistaken notions about that natural state. To clear up all doubts, a simple and detailed account of that natural state is given below.

That from which the five elements viz., the earth, water, fire, the air and the sky, are derived and in which these have their existence is called the Universal Nature. It is from this Universal nature that all things are created, in it they have their being and into it they merge themselves on decay. Even the principles of birth, existence and decay will achieve their natural perfection in it. If we think deeply we will arrive at this irrefragable truth that the heads of all

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the states in the world can remove the afflictions of humanity and bring abiding peace if only they are enthused with the spirit of a proper synthesis and make concerted efforts to achieve that end. Real peace will descend on this world only when the leaders on the political sphere of existence will join hands with the leaders in the spiritual sphere in an effort to bring about all-round welfare of the world. In the near future we will find that the leaders of the temporal and the spiritual spheres of existence will forget their individual failings and make joint efforts to bring about perfect evolution of manhood in this world. And then, the heads of the states will forget all about war. For, against whom, will they wage war? They will rather forget their mistakes and frailties of their fellow human beings and make efforts to the evolution of true humanity in this world. This will surely come about in the natural course of things. But, if man takes this initiative in the ushering in of that glorious state of manhood, that will, no doubt, bear testimony to the marvellous qualities of man viz., his humanism and his intellectual prowess.

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(2) Synthesis of man, mind and religion.

In Man was the first manifestation of the universal nature, in him evolved the mind for the first time. So, that in which the mind expresses itself perfectly is called man. Mind is immanent in all creation but it cannot manifest itself without the help of sense organs. The mind first expresses itself in its natural state when the infinite mind circumscribes itself within the limits of a physical body. So man is the first and natural owner of a physical body. The vibrations of the mind are perceptible only in the split-up physical body. Here alone do we find that mind is split up and vibrant; in other words, it is invested with consciousness. Thus, wherever the mind is vibrant, there is consciousness of a spiritual existence. And this consciousness first dawned in man and is, therefore, generic to his nature. This expression of the mind is peculiar to man and no other animal has the consciousness of religion. So, man is the first stage of enlightenment in the spiritual world and is the crown and glory of

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that world, whose spiritual development may lead up to Godhood; for even God incarnates himself on earth in the shape of man, accepts a leader of man as his spiritual preceptor and propagates religion for man. An analysis of this spiritually developed state as revealed through divine incarnation will establish the fact that man is the only natural expression of spiritual consciousness in the physical body. It will thus be clear that religious consciousness first evolved in man and religion should therefore be established in him also. Those who always seek to achieve excellence in the spiritual sphere through a process that destroys the mind should think that mind is the source of religious consciousness and there will be no scope for attainment to spiritual perfection through destruction of the mind.

The work that is done by man is becoming of man; so also, the religious functions done by him are becoming of him. So, the world expects from man such work and religion as are becoming of him and the humanity of man should remain unimpaired through a fusion of religion, action, science and divine knowledge.

(A) The work done by man is the work of man.

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(B) The religion observed by man is the religion of man.

(C) The knowledge and supreme wisdom manifested in man is the knowledge and wisdom of man.

(D) the fusion of action, knowledge and supreme wisdom is known as universal nature. This is the natural state of manhood.

The breeding ground of such consciousness is Mind. Again, the Mind expresses itself naturally through the human body. So, whatever thoughts and ideas may emanate from the mind will be known as the natural human consciousness. Such consciousness can never be achieved through the consciousness of a particular genus or colour or creed.

(3) The Universal Man.

Man is the first and chief stage in the natural evolution of the universe. And so, the religion practised for full expression of humanity is called the religion of man. Now what does man stand for? Man represents the first and full expression of mind in the created universe. It is in man that spiritual consciousness first made itself felt and so this

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spiritual urge in man is called the religion of man. The expression of the mind takes place in man only and in nothing else. And whereever there is expression of the mind, there is expression of the religious urge too. In man alone do we find the full expression of the mind. And universal religion is integrated with the universal mind. By the word 'Man' we mean the universal brotherhood of men. The religion of this universal brotherhood of men is the universal religion. If man perceives this oneness of the universal man with the universal religion, he will cease to have interest in sectarian creeds and dogmas.

The oft-quoted salutation to the spiritual preceptor runs as follows :—

"I make obeisance to the spiritual preceptor who has shown me the way to the one infinite and indivisible Being pervading the universe". If we analyse the above hymn we will come to know of the nature of the Being that is at the helm of the universe. That Being has been described as one and indivisible. The religion propagated by one who has attained to the stage of universal manhood cannot but be a universal religion. If we analyse the being

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of a religious preceptor we will find that he is made up of the universal mind, the universal life force and the universal body. The religious preceptor is indeed the repository of universal knowledge. So, a person, who has himself attained to the stage of universal manhood, will practice such a religion as will enable others too to reach the stage of universal manhood. Perhaps, it will not now be difficult for all religious minded people to realise the import of what has been elaborated above.

Thus, when we speak of a nation we speak of humanity as a whole, and not of such religious communities as the Hindus, the Moslems, the Jains, the Christians and so on and so forth. When man and his religion are spoken of as universal, his religious treatises must also be universal. If we endeavour to understand the underlying significance of the various religious treatises of humanity, we will find that those who produced those treatises did so with a view to bringing about a natural fusion of the disparate entities comprising humanity. The religious treatises could not have been produced without the urge to spiritual realisation. So, the producer of a religious treatise is, first of all, a religious man and

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secondly, a producer of the treatises. But, owing to the divergent tendencies in the matter of religious realisation the religious treatises and religion as such have lost that universal characteristic. To-day, religion and religious treatises are unable to bring about a proper synthesis of the divergent groups of human beings and, thereby, to usher in peace for humanity. The first duty of man would be to bring about a proper synthesis of himself with religion and religious treatises. But, what is being done is contrary to this. Those who have circumscribed religions and religious treatises within narrow limits and thereby deprived humanity of the benefits that would naturally come to them, have not only disgraced religion and religious treatises but practised a false way of living. They have cut at the roots of the truth that forms the bed rock of all humanity. First of all, there was the division into different religious groups viz., the Hindus, the Moslems, the Christians, the Jains and so on and so forth. Then, again, there were further divisions into Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas and the Sudras. These men are made up of the same elements, had their being in the same natural enviroments;

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their shapes and their ways of living are the same; so, how can they have different religions? They get themselves embroiled in the varying tides of time and thus come to have different ways of living. If we analyse the method by which religion was first propagated and established, we will find that a glaring mistake was committed even in the manner of spiritual realisation. Those proponents of different religious orders were inspired by the spiritual consciousness that dawned within themselves. They never cared to think that the religious preceptor and the religion propagated by him must all be universal and thus universal consciousness is guiding and inspiring the individual beings constituting humanity. So, those men have to become one with universal humanity. If we can bring about a synthesis of universal man and universal religion, there will not be any scope for division of humanity into different groups, communities etc. in future.

If we go deep into it, we will find that the propagators of the different religious systems were guided by the conditions obtaining in their times and their efforts at establishment of religions give evidence to their powers to see through the different phases of time, past,

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present and future, but they do not indicate the true qualities of Universal religious urge. Theirs were religions based upon the conditions of the time as apprehended by them and so is quite different from the universal urge for religion. The first object of religious savants would be to bring every one round to the way of universal religion. Man has evolved from universal nature, so his religion would be such as to bring him in tune with the universal spirit from which he has derived his existence. So, one should be careful if the spirit for practice of religion is in tune with the universal spirit of religion. Otherwise, all humanity will have to suffer for the failings of a few proponents of religious systems. It has been established that to this day none has acquired the knowledge to impart perfect knowledge to others. For, such knowledge can only be possible when time (past, present and future) will be annihilated in the universe. Before that, there cannot be any universal knowledge for humanity.

When we speak about the religion of man, we do not mean any split-up system of religion, but we mean the universal religion of man and this permits of no regret or conflict between

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religious communities. So, this is the only way towards effecting indivisible peace for humanity and the solution of all grievances and wants of men. If it is asked, what would be the way to spiritual realisation for men who have so far conditioned their lives on the systems of religions practiced by them, we will merely say that irrespective of their religious creeds they would be absorbed in the universal whole as envisaged in the universal religion of man. Real peace will descend on the earth only when the different groups of humanity will forget their individual mistakes and frailties and strive to come under the banner of one universal religion. The different religious communities viz., Hindus, Moslems, Christians etc., would not achieve that union of humanity, despite achievements within the limits of their communities. In future, the universal spirit of religion will be the rallying force for the union of humanity. No religion has so far been able to bring about fusion of humanity with religious treatises and thereby to usher in real peace for humanity.

To-day the world is seeking a way towards achieving real peace for humanity. Why is it that men fail to bring about real happiness

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even though they have all the means for enjoyment of material comforts and pleasures? How is it that despite man's intellect and his superb advancement in science man has not been able to bring in real peace in the world? Peace will never be realised merely because there are means to achieving it? Peace will be realised only when man will get back to his own natural self.

If we study the sphere of religion we will find that here, too, the way to achieving peace has not been discovered yet. There is a way to peace, no doubt, but that way still remains undiscovered. The way to real peace can never be but one. When people are guided by their respective religious creeds, they have deflected far away from true religion. The way to universal religion is the only way to achieving fullness of one's being. When people cling to this path even in the midst of sorrows and sufferings, they are religious in the proper sense of the world. And real peace will be achieved when all men will thus condition their lives according to the urge for universal consciousness.

What is the aim of the universal man? What are the objectives for the study of the religious treatises viz., the Vedas, the Vedantas, etc.

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The object is to achieve perfect fusion of the religious treatises and to bring about a fusion of the disparate entities of humanity. A religious treatise should aim at converting the infinite entities into one universal nature.

It is personal realisation of spirituality that has converted the religious treatises into split-up forms relative to the individual human beings and it is due to those split-up creeds and dogmas that man has fallen from his glorious state of manhood.

The intellect of man and the intellect of the superman are equally derived from Nature. So, it is duty of us all to live our lives true to that natural state of manhood. Sectarian or communal ideas have never been able to usher in peace for humanity nor will ever be able to do so. God is invested with the quality of being "eternally present" but this quality of being eternally present is not related either to the past or to the future.

Religion effects synthesis of the personal, the social and the universal aspects of man and such a religion represents the proper state of man in his universal consciousness. There is no difference between man and religion. The

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difference is only in the mode of application; so, man has to become natural in comparision with the spirit of true religion.

(4) The universal language of man.

Just as the split-up languages in the world are called mother-tongues, so the fusion of these languages would be called universal mother tongue. The roots of the languages are the same. It is only in the hearing of them and in their application that they are different. So, any language can be converted into the universal language. Only, it has to be seen that language to be spoken would be easily comprehensible and communicable to others. A language that can enable all the people of the world to exchange their thoughts with one another may be called the universal language. And the languages that are spoken within the limits of particular countries or communities are called split-up languages.

(5) The Universal Land.

The world is one and indivisible but to individual human beings it appears as split-up geographical configurations of the earth. Seen

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through the angles of vision of particular states or countries, the world is split up into portions of the earth. But, basically, the world is one and whole. So, the place where the universal man lives is called the universal land.

(6) Universal mother.

The Universal Mother is the mother of the entire human race. We have to get over the notion that mother stands always for a female. The universal Mother is neither male nor female, even as the universal land or universal tongue never indicates either a male or a female concept. From the lap of the mother has emerged all humanity and even God or the prince of the universe. So, we call it the universal mother. The sum total of all human beings, be they Hindus, Muslims, Christians etc., is represented by the universal mother. Just as the mother, the mother-land, and the mother-tongue are unavoidable and common to all humanity, so, no question of race or nationality arises, nor any conflict of nations.

By man we mean not merely the male human being but both male and female human beings.

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By the Universe is meant the universal nature. The broken-up lands are known as our mother lands. The language that we call mother tongue enables us to communicate our experiences about birth, existence and death. By mother we mean the female human being of whom we are born. But the person who has given birth to the universe, the language and the man is also the Mother. So if we take the universe, the universal language and the several mothers of the universe together, we have nothing but the universal Mother, who appears to us in three phases viz., (1) the mother who creates, (2) the mother who nourishes and (3) the mother who destroys.

(1) The mother, who creates, embraces all from matter to living animals and from colour to language.

(2) The mother, who nourishes, embraces the five elements, the five senses and even the milk of the breast.

(3) The mother, who destroys, embraces natural death (disintegration into five elements) and unnatural death. By unnatural death we mean death after having been born of the mother,

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nourished by her, married to her and passed a life of illusion with her.

And man dies natural death when he attains to his natural state of manhood by effecting a synthesis of body, mind and life force. For, then, the split-up human body disintegrates and man attains to the state of universal manhood. So, the body of the mother is born of the mother, is sustained by the mother or motherhood, and ultimately disintegrates into the mother or the five elements.

N.B. When the prophets and divine messengers incarnate themselves on earth, they first make their advent through motherhood then propagate their thoughts through mother tongues. The religious Mantras are dependent on the mother tongues, for, without it no Mantras can be composed.

(7) The Material World and the Spiritual World.

Shall we not be committing a mistake if we look at a thing as different from what it basically is? The two worlds, material and spiritual cannot be complete by themselves. Matter and spirit relate to each other. Without

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the one the others existence can not be proved. So we must look at them as without being in conflict, for such is the true state of their being. So, our mode of worship should effect a synthesis of these two spheres of existence.

Nothing goes in vain in this universe. One feels the experience of universal manhood only when one has lived through the experience of a split-up existence within the narrow limits of a sect or clan. All conflicts get resolved only when one realises that the material and the spiritual worlds are not different from each other. As long as this integral vision is wanting the two worlds stand apart. As long as the mind, the body and the life force do not work in a concerted fashion, one can not experience the knowledge of the Infinite Universal Being. As long as the body remains distinct from the mind and the mind from the life force, the thoughts and the actions done by a man cannot be considered as related to the universal existence. So, without the union of the three, divine action or divine knowledge cannot take place.

Just as God's incarnations are all derived from the supreme Divine Being, so various nationalities have emerged from the same human race. God is one, so also is the

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Universe. We have now come to our senses and realised that all human beings are derived from the same universal manhood. Right from the dawn of creation man has striven hard to overcome the obstacles in the way of his living, but, to this day all his efforts at bringing about a proper synthesis of all conflicting factors in his life have not borne fruit. His wants and grievances have gone on multiplying. The reason for it is that the material world has been divorced from the spiritual world. We now feel what a grievous blunder it was to break up the two worlds into separate entities.

Perfection is achieved only through simultaneous development in the two spheres of existence. The two spheres are never in conflict. Our moralists have lost track of this essential unity of the two worlds and so also our political leaders and, as a consequence, they have not the capacity to bring good to humanity. A fusion of the two worlds is the crying need of the hour; for, without it no peace will ever be achieved. Without true knowledge there can be no peace. Man has achieved much through the centuries and it is no wonder that now he will turn round on himself and feel the experience of universal humanity in him.

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First of all, there has to be a synthesis of universal man and universal religion and this will lead up to a fusion of the different creeds and nationalities. If at the start we have a vision of universal synthesis, all conflicts will get resolved automatically.

Before creation there was no question of a basic difference being noticed between one object and another. Before creation every object remained in its distinct individual state. There all differences had got resolved and there was no difference between matter and religion. There was none to see any one else nor was the need for such seeing. Individual nature differs from universal nature in that the former is the unresolved state of the five elements of nature. True nature will manifest itself only when the five elements will attain to perfection and cease to function. When nature will thus manifest itself in the universe, man will effect a synthesis of his real 'self' and 'self' as revealed in the world. In other words, there will be no difference between the material world and the spiritual. This would be proper synthesis.

We create difference between matter and spirit. If any one looks deeper, he will find that there is no difference, as such, between the

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two. Matter is something where mind is not expressed; and consciousness is something where mind is expressed. If we analyse the universal nature and the body of man we will find that man is made up of all the elements in the universe and is sustained and preserved by the universal nature. The difference lies in this that in the universal nature there is mind but not in a revealed condition, while in man there is mind and that too in a revealed state. So, basically speaking, there is no difference between man and universal nature.

If we study ancient history we will find that men effected a synthesis of the material and spiritual spheres of existence and conditioned their social, material and religious lives accordingly. Even those whom we call inexperienced in the science of religion set about ruling the country, having kept religion and the religious preceptor before them. Even to-day, the British are spending enormous sums of money by way of propaganda for their religion and state. It is a matter of deep regret that the administration of our country which in the past evoked an upsurge of religious emotions throughout the world, hesitates to pursue a policy informed with religion. It was

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from India that the various religious tenets emerged and spread over the world. It is up to India, therefore, to effect a synthesis of the different religious tenets and thereby to usher in peace for humanity.

N.B.—A question may be asked as to whether religious consciousness in India came in a universal form or in a split-up form. Furthermore why is there such a diversity of religions? A person whose religious awakening is all-embracing and universal can never propagate split-up religious tenets and dogmas. If a true synthesis were effected between universal man and universal religion right from the beginning, man would not have to resort to different systems of religious thoughts and tenets in the conditioning of his existence. If, on the other hand, we say that the religious awakening came in a split-up form, then all talk about universal religion would sound as sanctimonious hypocrisy. It is also true that unless a person attains to the state of universal manhood, his efforts at bringing about transformation of all humanity into universal manhood would be altogether unavailing. It may thus be concluded that the real awakening of humanity to a state of universal manhood has not so far been achieved.

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Furthermore, no one has so far made efforts to propagate religion in the full consciousness of the basic reality of religion. We have now to rectify the error that was committed long ago and has since been repeated so many times. All our strifes and discord are traceable to the splitting up of religion into so many tenets and dogmas. And the only way to bringing in real peace for humanity is to effect a synthesis of these religious tenets into the consciousness of a universal religion.

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